

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 344
By Sontany

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Yvonne C. Wood on her nomination for the 2005 ATHENA Award.

WHEREAS, this General Assembly welcomes the opportunity to support gender equity in all facets of society and commends individuals and organizations that work to create leadership opportunities for women, thus permitting society to benefit from the particular characteristics and qualities that women bring to leadership roles in business, government, the arts and sciences, or any other realm of human endeavor; and

WHEREAS, the ATHENA Foundation is one such dynamic organization, which, since 1982, has worked with hundreds of communities to encourage and acknowledge women in leadership positions; the ATHENA Award program inspires the achievement of professional excellence by honoring outstanding women leaders; and

WHEREAS, the individuals honored by such awards actively assist women in realizing their full leadership potential; demonstrate excellence, creativity, and initiative in their business or profession; and provide valuable public service by contributing time and energy to improve the quality of life for others in the community; and

WHEREAS, this year's Nashville ATHENA Award nominee, Yvonne C. Wood, is one such estimable woman who evinces the qualities of courage, strength, wisdom, and harmony; and

WHEREAS, nominated by the Nashville Women's Political Caucus, Ms. Wood began her professional career as a secretary; her experience in numerous industries, including the music industry, mortgage banking, and state government, has proved effective in her efforts to affect change for women in the workplace; and

WHEREAS, during her service in state government, which included her tenure as the Director of Program Integrity for the Medicaid/TennCare Program, Ms. Wood helped to facilitate significant legislative enactments as an advocate for women, children, and families; and

WHEREAS, her establishment of the Sumner County Chapter of the Professional Secretaries of America in 1966 enabled local secretaries' participation in the Certified Professional Secretary Exam; and

WHEREAS, as the organization's charter President, she met with key government officials and legislators and helped to successfully lobby for the passage of legislation that would enable state secretaries who passed the Professional Exam to receive a two-step pay increase; and

WHEREAS, as the Associate Director for the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and as Director of the Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation, Ms. Wood continued her advocacy for more equitable pay for women, researching salaries in private companies and other states and supplying her findings to the State Department of Personnel; and

WHEREAS, due to her efforts, numerous categories of positions were reclassified, thereby elevating salaries and promoting many women from support ranks to professional levels; and

WHEREAS, after forty years of service in the private and public sectors, Ms. Wood took a much-deserved retirement; however, as a result of requests for her assistance, within months, she returned to work and established Wood Consultants, a conference and event planning company; and

WHEREAS, her own success and renown as a leader garnered her the 2004 Woman Business Owner of the Year Award, and she has twice received national awards recognizing her contribution to identifying fraud and recovering major funds to the Tennessee Medicaid program: the Inspector General's Integrity Award (1992) and the United States Postal Inspection Service Award (1995); and

WHEREAS, a consummate professional of the utmost integrity, Ms. Wood has demonstrated dedication to advancing women throughout her life; she is recognized both locally and nationally for her social consciousness and as an effective advocate for women; and

WHEREAS, she has worked assiduously to advance her community and has been unwavering in her commitment to helping women meet their full potential; and

WHEREAS, wholly committed to the noble precepts of public service that have earned Tennessee fame as the "Volunteer State," Ms. Yvonne C. Wood should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor and commend Yvonne C. Wood, a woman of great integrity, ability, and compassion, on her meritorious service to the citizens of this State, congratulate her upon being nominated for the 2005 ATHENA Award, and extend to her our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.